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Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

Programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2015: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains a review of the progress made by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 2015. It covers the activities of the Division on the analysis of fertility, health and mortality and international migration; the preparation of world population estimates and projections; the monitoring of population policies; the analysis of the interrelations between population and development; support for intergovernmental processes, including the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents, the organization of expert group meetings and the monitoring of internationally agreed development goals; the dissemination of population information and data; and technical cooperation activities.

The objective of the subprogramme on population is to strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and to integrate the population dimensions into the development agenda at the national and international levels. The Commission on Population and Development provides the subprogramme with intergovernmental guidance.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible for the implementation of the subprogramme on population. The subprogramme is guided by the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, by the outcome of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly (resolution S-21/2, annex) on key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action[1] and by the decision of the General Assembly to extend the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond 2014 and ensure its follow-up in order to fully meet its goals and objectives (resolution 65/234). The outcomes of other relevant international conferences and summits, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (resolution 68/4) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), are also taken into account. The subprogramme responds to the resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Population and Development, in particular resolution 2004/1 on the work programme in the field of population (E/2004/25, chap. I, sect. B), and to relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

2. As described in the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2014-2015, the objective of the subprogramme on population is to strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and to integrate the population dimensions into the international development agenda (see A/67/6/Rev.1, programme 7, subprogramme 5). The Commission on Population and Development provides intergovernmental guidance to the subprogramme.

3. The expected accomplishments for the subprogramme, according to the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/68/6 (Sect. 9)), are:

(a) Enhanced awareness of the international community of new and emerging population issues and increased knowledge and understanding of the interactions between population and development, including the gender dimensions of demographic phenomena, especially in regard to fertility, mortality, migration, HIV/AIDS, urbanization, population growth, population ageing and the environment;

(b) Effectively facilitate review by Member States of progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and of relevant instruments of the United Nations development agenda, particularly the Millennium Summit and its follow-up;

(c) Improved accessibility and timeliness of population information and data, including sex-disaggregated data for use by Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and academia.

4. The Population Division collaborates closely with the agencies, funds, programmes and bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of the

[1] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

work programme and in the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development. Permanent Missions to the United Nations, national government offices, United Nations offices, researchers, media representatives and the public regularly consult the Division regarding data, information and analyses on population and development issues.

5. The present report is focused on the research and other activities carried out by the Population Division during 2015, grouped by thematic area. In addition, it provides a summary of the activities and outputs of the Division, which include the provision of support for intergovernmental processes, the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents, the monitoring of internationally agreed development goals, the dissemination of population information and data, and technical cooperation. A list of activities and outputs is set out in the annex.

II. Fertility and family planning

6. The Population Division published a comprehensive data set on family planning indicators, *World Contraceptive Use 2015*, and annual estimates and projections of family planning indicators for the period 1970- 2030, *Model-based Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2015*. The model-based estimates and projections informed the final report of the Secretary-General on global progress on the Millennium Development Goals, in particular progress on target 5.B to achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health. The model-based estimates and projections provide key evidence on the degree to which the demand for family planning is being met. They are used widely by entities focused on improving sexual and reproductive health, including global initiatives such as Family Planning 2020. Moreover, the estimates and projections have been used to assess ambitious but feasible benchmarks for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Further methodological work to expand data and estimates to apply to all women of reproductive age was initiated in 2014 with support from an extrabudgetary project of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. An infochart displaying some of the key facts from existing data on contraceptive use and the unmet need for family planning was released in 2015.

7. A concise analysis of family planning was presented in *Trends in Contraceptive Use Worldwide 2015*, highlighting indicators of family planning in 2015 and projections to 2030. In 2015, 12 per cent of married or in-union women were estimated to have an unmet need for family planning; that is, they wished to stop or delay childbearing but were not using any method of contraception. The level of unmet need was much higher, 22 per cent, in the least developed countries. The number of married or in-union women using contraception worldwide is projected to rise slightly, from 758 million in 2015 to 778 million in 2030. Growth in the number of contraceptive users is projected to be particularly high in all regions of Africa and in Southern Asia.

8. The Population Division released the most comprehensive collection of time-series data on fertility and nuptiality to date. *World Fertility Data 2015* provides up-to-date information on total fertility, age-specific fertility rates and the mean age at childbearing. In *World Marriage Data 2015*, data from around 1970 through 2014 for more than 220 countries or areas are presented, on four key indicators:

distributions by marital status of men and women, numbers of currently married men and women, numbers of ever-married men and women, and the mean age at marriage. The tabulations distinguish between consensual unions and marriages whenever possible. The two data sets are publicly accessible on the website of the Division.

9. Key trends in fertility are presented in *World Fertility Patterns 2015*, a data booklet based on fertility-related estimates and projections from the 2015 revision of *World Population Prospects*. A more detailed analysis of fertility levels and trends will be presented in the forthcoming *World Fertility Report 2015*, including updated estimates of the contributions of fertility to future population growth and decline. Quantifying the demographic drivers of future population trends is important for developing social, economic and environmental policies in response to impending demographic changes. The estimates are also used as part of an online tool hosted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).[2]

III. Health and mortality

10. The Population Division worked on the forthcoming *World Mortality 2015: Highlights*, containing an overview of trends in mortality key indicators at the global level for development groups and major geographic areas. The report is based on data from the 2015 revision of *World Population Prospects*, and contains a review of trends in life expectancy at birth, and child, adult and old-age mortality. The analysis covers mostly the period 1990-2015, the implementation period identified for the Millennium Development Goals, and discusses how further improvements in child survival can be achieved by addressing key determinants of inequality in infant and early childhood mortality in low- and middle-income countries.

11. The Population Division issued an online dataset containing tables from the forthcoming *World Mortality Report 2015*. The tables provide estimates of life expectancy at birth, infant and under-5 mortality, the probability of dying between ages 15 and 60 and between birth and age 60, and life expectancy at age 60 by country and region for five-year periods from 1950-1955 to 2010-2015. The Division also published a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of primary empirical data for the estimation of adult and child mortality at the national level, *Mortality Data Inventory 2015*. The data inventory can be queried interactively through an online database.

12. The Population Division published a wallchart entitled *World Mortality 2015*, in which key indicators of mortality at the global, regional and country levels are presented. The wallchart highlights variations among countries in various mortality indicators: annual deaths; crude death rates; life expectancy at birth by sex; infant mortality; under-5 mortality; and probabilities of dying from ages 15 to 60 and from birth to age 70. Estimates of mortality are complemented by information on the age distribution of deaths and on cause-specific information with respect to AIDS mortality and maternal deaths.

13. To further inform *World Mortality Report 2015*, the Population Division also conducted analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys in 50 low- and middle-income countries to document the impact of household wealth and mothers'

[2] See www.devinfolive.info/decomposition/.

education on mortality under age 5, and produced a technical paper (2015/1) entitled "The impact of socio-economic inequalities on early childhood survival: results from the Demographic and Health Surveys". The paper contains an assessment of the extent to which socioeconomic inequalities affect the survival of children under the age of 5. Some of the key findings of this study were also reported in a brief entitled "Inequality in early childhood survival" (No. 2015/3).

14. In addition, the Population Division published a technical paper (2014/4) entitled "Estimating life tables for developing countries". The paper discusses the estimation of life tables for countries without sufficient empirical data to compute life tables directly for input into *World Population Prospects*. The paper contains a review of the various types of data available for deriving empirical mortality estimates, discusses appropriate models and methods by type of data, and also contains a case study demonstrating the application of all the recommended models and methods. The paper demonstrates, in particular, how existing empirical data, especially on old-age mortality, can best be used to derive time series of abridged life tables and age patterns of mortality over time.

IV. International migration

15. The Population Division issued a new set of global migrant stock estimates disaggregated by age and sex and by country of birth or citizenship. *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision* provides the latest estimates of the international migrant stock for 232 countries and areas since 1990. The global stock of international migrants reached 244 million in mid-2015, an increase of 41 per cent compared with 2000. The release of the *2015 Revision* was accompanied by a wallchart entitled *International Migration 2015* and *International Migration Report 2015: Highlights*, which provide a summary of the latest global migration trends.

16. The Division issued the dataset entitled *International Migration Flows to and from Selected Countries: The 2015 Revision*, which contains annual data on inflows and outflows of international migrants for more than 40 countries for which such data were available. The dataset is accompanied by documentation including definitions, data sources and criteria used to identify the flows of immigrants and emigrants.

17. The Division produced two briefs on migration. In one, entitled "Trends in international migration, 2015", the main findings from the 2015 revision of the trends in international migrant stock are presented. The other, "Integrating migration into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", shows how migration is reflected in the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

18. The Division continued to build the Global Migration Database, a comprehensive collection of empirical data on the numbers and characteristics of international migrants worldwide. By the end of 2015, the Database included over 4,900 data tables for over 90 per cent of countries and areas worldwide. With more than 6,700 registered users located in over 150 countries, the Database has become an indispensable resource for migration researchers worldwide.

19. The Division also contributed to various activities organized by the Global Forum on Migration and Development, including participation in a meeting on

migration as part of the post-2015 United Nations development agenda (Geneva, February) and in a panel on migration, labour mobility and the renewed global partnership for sustainable development, co-organized by the Global Forum, the Global Migration Group and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development (New York, April). The Division also contributed a background paper on migration and the post-2015 development agenda for the annual summit meeting of the Global Forum, participated in the civil society days of the Forum, and gave a presentation at the Platform for Partnerships (Istanbul, October).

20. The thirteenth coordination meeting on international migration was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 12 and 13 February 2015. It was the latest in a series of such annual coordination meetings convened since 2002 by the Population Division. The meeting, organized pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/208, addressed three main topics, namely, (a) integrating migration into the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, (b) leveraging migration within the context of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and (c) assessing the implementation of the commitments made by the international community during the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The meeting was attended by some 130 participants, including representatives of Member States, observers, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, offices of the United Nations Secretariat, United Nations regional commissions and non-governmental organizations and experts.

21. The meeting featured introductory remarks by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration. An interactive debate included representatives from the Governments of Turkey and Bangladesh in their capacities as the current and next Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, respectively; the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Chair of the 2014 Global Forum civil society days, and the World Bank in its capacity as Chair of the Global Migration Group. Subsequent panel discussions highlighted the role of migrant remittances in implementing the post-2015 development agenda and the measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to migration. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants moderated a discussion on the human rights of migrants, the costs of labour migration, stranded migrants, migrants in crisis and protection at sea.

22. The Division continued to support the work of the Special Representative and some of his advisers, by administering funds contributed by the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden, holding regular meetings with his advisers and maintaining the Special Representative's web page.

23. The Division participated in various activities organized by the Global Migration Group. The Division assisted the Chair of the Group in preparing briefing notes, statements and reports and in organizing events, including one on harnessing migration, remittances and diaspora contributions for financing sustainable development (New York, May). As Co-Chair of the Global Migration Group working group on data and research, the Division contributed to the preparation of a handbook on the use of migration data for development.

24. The Division also contributed to an expert meeting on international migration and development, organized by the Development Centre of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Paris, February). In line with General Assembly resolution 55/93, the Division contributed to, and made available on its website, statements issued by the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly on the occasion of International Migrants Day, on 18 December 2015.

25. The Division responded to an unprecedented number of requests for briefing notes, talking points and statements by senior officials on migration-related issues. The Division provided substantive support for migration-related events organized by the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly.

26. The Division maintained and updated its online platform[3] for the dissemination of information on migration-related activities. The website provides access to the latest estimates of the international migrant stock, international migration flows, analytical publications and briefs. It also serves as a repository for information related to meetings on migration organized or serviced by the Division, including intergovernmental meetings, coordination meetings, expert meetings, side events, panel discussions and workshops. The website lists reports of the Secretary-General on international migration and development and relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Commission on Population and Development.

V. World population estimates and projections

27. The preparation of the official United Nations population estimates and projections for all countries and areas of the world is a key part of the work of the Population Division. These estimates and projections are used extensively within the United Nations system and by the general public and are distributed as part of widely used databases accessible on the Internet, including the World Development Indicators database, maintained by the World Bank; the data portal of the United Nations, UNDATA, maintained by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; and FAOSTAT, the statistics database maintained by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Several commercial database services also redistribute the work of the Population Division, under agreements with the Department of Public Information.

28. In July 2015, the Population Division issued *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision*, which received considerable media coverage following its launch at a press conference. According to this latest assessment, the world's population numbered 7.3 billion in mid-2015 and is projected to increase to 9.7 billion by 2050. These results are based on the medium-variant projection, which assumes a decline in fertility in countries where large families are still prevalent and a slight increase in fertility in several low-fertility countries. Small differences in the trajectory of fertility during the coming decades may have major consequences for population size in the long run. The high-variant projection, for example, which assumes an extra half child per woman (on average) compared with the medium variant, implies a world population of 10.8 billion in 2050. The low-variant projection, whereby

[3] See www.unmigration.org.

women have half a child less, on average, than under the medium variant, would produce a population of 8.7 billion in 2050.

29. The Division has continued to develop probabilistic population projections for all countries and areas of the world up to the year 2100. Given the long projection horizon, results at the country level are subject to a high degree of uncertainty. Users are thus invited to focus not only on the outcomes of the medium variant, which corresponds to the median of several thousand projected country trajectories for each component, but also on the uncertainty intervals, which describe a range of plausible outcomes. The results from the probabilistic projections were issued in a CD-ROM and are available on the website of the Division.

30. The *2015 Revision* confirms that significant gains in life expectancy have been achieved in recent years. Globally, life expectancy at birth rose by three years between the period 2000-2005 and the period 2010-2015 or from 67 to 70 years. All major geographic areas shared in the life expectancy gains during this period, but the greatest increases were in Africa, where life expectancy rose by six years in the 2000s, after rising by only two years in the previous decade. The reduction in under-5 mortality, which has received intense global attention as the target of Millennium Development Goal 4, has also proceeded swiftly in many countries in the past decade. In the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the group of least developed countries, the annual pace of decline in under-5 mortality accelerated after 2000.

31. Several outputs presenting the results of the *2015 Revision* are available on the website of the Population Division,[4] on which are presented data files in both Excel and ASCII formats, an interactive database and other supporting materials such as data sources and meta-information. The site also includes useful figures and maps illustrating the data. A wallchart and a data booklet providing key demographic indicators for all countries and areas of the world were also published.

32. In 2015, the Division began work on updating the software used for its population estimates and projections. These applications will need to be completed and fully tested prior to the next round of estimates and projections. This is a major undertaking that will require several months of work.

33. In 2015, the Division also released a report containing a detailed analysis of the results of the 2014 revision of *World Urbanization Prospects*, which contains the latest estimates of the urban and rural populations of 233 countries or areas from 1950 to 2014 and projections to 2050, as well as estimates of population size from 1950 to 2014 and projections to 2030 for all urban agglomerations with 300,000 inhabitants or more in 2014. Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 54 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2014. In 1950, 30 per cent of the world's population was urban; by 2050, that figure is projected to be 66 per cent. Close to half the world's urban dwellers reside in relatively small settlements of fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, while only around 1 in 8 live in the 28 mega-cities with more than 10 million inhabitants. Several decades ago, most of the world's largest urban agglomerations were found in the more developed regions, but today's large cities are concentrated in the global South. The fastest-growing urban agglomerations are medium-sized cities and cities with fewer than 1 million inhabitants located in Asia and Africa.

[4] See esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/.

VI. Population policies

34. In 2015, the Population Division continued implementation of the *Eleventh United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development*, a series begun by the Division in 1963. These surveys record government views and policies on various key aspects of population and development and provide a unique tool for documenting how such views and policies have changed over the last half century. The *Inquiry* was distributed to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York and was made available in print and electronic formats. As at 31 December 2015, *Inquiry* responses had been received from 63 Governments. The results of the *Inquiry* are being incorporated into the World Population Policies Database.

35. The Division made progress toward the forthcoming 2015 revision of the World Population Policies Database. Updated biennially, the Database provides up-to-date information on government views, policies and programme measures on population-related topics for all 193 Member States, two observer States and two non-member States of the United Nations. The Database shows the evolution of government policies and programmes adopted with respect to population growth, population ageing, fertility, reproductive health and family planning, spatial distribution and urbanization and international migration since the mid-1970s. The Division also prepared interactive country profiles of policy variables included in the Database together with related demographic and socioeconomic indicators.

36. In 2015, the Division began implementing the Global Abortion Policies project, in collaboration with the Department of Reproductive Health and Research of the World Health Organization (WHO). The goal of the project is to develop an interactive, open-access database and repository of current abortion laws and policies for all countries of the world. During 2015, a comprehensive questionnaire was developed and 10 international teams of experts from institutions around the world were employed to research and gather relevant information, including official policy documents related to abortion. The completed questionnaires have been sent for review by Governments to ensure that the information therein is current, accurate and complete.

37. The Division, with support from WHO, began to develop the Global Abortion Policies Database application and a searchable repository of downloadable documents. The Database on abortion policies, with an archive of legal and policy documents and country profiles on abortion policies for all Member States and non-member States of the United Nations will be made available through an interactive database in the second half of 2016.

38. The Division, together with the East-West Centre, organized an expert group meeting on "Policy responses to low fertility" on 2 and 3 November.[5] The objective of the meeting was to discuss policy approaches and options in countries facing low fertility and population ageing. To facilitate the discussions at the meeting, the organizers prepared 19 policy briefs that examined policies in 16 countries across Asia, Europe, North America and Oceania with low and very low levels of fertility. The meeting was attended by more than 50 academic experts and policymakers from more than 20 countries, United Nations staff and representatives of international

[5] See www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/expert-group/24/index.shtml.

organizations. Immediately following the meeting, the Division hosted, jointly with the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, a briefing for Member States on "Policy responses to low fertility" during which global trends in fertility and population ageing and summaries of major findings and key policy messages from discussions at the expert group meeting were presented.

VII. Population and development

39. The Population Division published *World Population Ageing 2015: Highlights* and the full report with the same title incorporating up-to-date estimates and projections of the number and share of older persons in the population for all countries and regions based on *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision*. The *Highlights* report provides a brief summary of global trends in population ageing, the sociodemographic characteristics of the older population and the demographic drivers of trends in the number and share of older persons. It is noted in the report that, globally, the number of people aged 60 or over is projected to grow from 901 million in 2015 to more than 1.4 billion in 2030 and more than 2 billion by 2050. The population aged 60 or over is the fastest growing population age group, and the global population of older persons is increasingly concentrated in the developing world. The full report also includes analyses of linkages between population ageing and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the report, several challenges for the post-2015 period associated with population ageing are highlighted, including the insufficient coverage of old-age pension programmes, the fiscal pressures associated with an increasing ratio of consumers to producers and the importance of adapting health systems to meet the needs of a growing older population. Policies and behavioural changes related to pension system reforms, investments in human capital or increased savings that can address the aforementioned challenges are also noted.

40. Recognizing the importance of the growing number of older persons in Africa, the Division published the *Directory of Research on Ageing in Africa: 2004-2015*. The *Directory* provides an updated inventory of research activities on ageing in the region carried out since 2004, building on a previous WHO directory that covered the period 1995-2003. The aim is to promote research on this topic and, ultimately, the use of the existing data for the formulation and implementation of ageing policies in African countries.

41. The Division released the 2015 edition of *Profiles of Ageing*, which provides up-to-date data on 10 selected sociodemographic indicators of ageing and older persons, including the total, percentage share, annual growth rate, sex ratio, potential old-age support ratio, labour force participation and age at retirement. The profiles are given for individual countries, subregions, major areas and the world and are accompanied by graphs setting out selected indicators. The Division also published the *World Population Ageing 2015* infochart, a novel way to display key demographic data and brief messages on population dynamics in a visually appealing format.

42. On the occasion of the high-level event of the General Assembly on 29 May 2015 marking the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, the Division published a brief on "Youth population trends and sustainable development", in which summary information on the demographic trends pertaining

to the age group is presented. In the brief, it is confirmed that the size of the youth population has peaked in all regions of the world except Africa and it is noted that many developing countries with growing youth populations are struggling to provide them with education and productive employment. Country-specific situations need to be taken into account in the implementation of policies to realize the benefits of the demographic dividend.

43. Interest in the interrelationship between population dynamics and the environment has been increasing in the context of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the new international agreement on climate change adopted during the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in December 2015. In that connection, the Division produced a wallchart entitled "Population, Consumption and the Environment 2015", which includes the latest data available on 13 indicators, including population size and growth, degree of urbanization, economic growth, energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, at the national, regional and global levels. The chart also includes graphs illustrating the relationship between trends in population, energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions.

44. The Division published two additional reports in the area of population and development. The first, entitled "Population 2030: demographic challenges and opportunities for sustainable development planning", was prepared as part of the research for drafting the report of the Secretary-General on the theme for the forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development. In the report, population projections are examined for countries and regions from 2015 to 2030, the period of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, and some of the coming challenges to, and opportunities for, sustainable development that will be closely associated with demographic trends during this period are identified.

45. In the second report, published as a technical paper and entitled "Population ageing, intergenerational transfers and demographic dividend in Ecuador", the methods of national transfer accounts[6] are applied to examine trends in ageing and their economic consequences in Ecuador, including policy implications for employment and for investments in education, health and social security, in order to realize the potential benefits of the demographic dividend.

VIII. Support for intergovernmental processes

A. Reports of the Secretary-General

46. The Population Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on the theme for the forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development, in 2015, "Integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda" (E/CN.9/2015/3). The report was focused on the demographic changes projected to occur over the next 15 years and discussed their implications for efforts to achieve sustainable development. It was emphasized in the report that the projected growth of the world's population until 2030 would require countries to plan ahead and develop policies to provide access to resources

[6] *National Transfer Accounts Manual*, 2013 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.XIII.6).

for growing numbers of people, if they wished to end poverty and hunger and ensure health, education and equality for all, while ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns and safeguarding the environment.

47. For the annual session of the Commission in 2015, the Division also prepared a report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2014 (E/CN.9/2015/6).

48. Later in 2015, the Division initiated work on the report of the Secretary-General on the special theme for the forty-ninth session of the Commission, in 2016, "Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda". In the report, the current status of demographic evidence and its capacity to support the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals is reviewed. It is focused on the core systems generating demographic data and discusses how the "data revolution" has already improved their performance and the potential for accelerating such improvements. It is underscored in the report that open access to anonymized microdata and the use of geo-referencing as part of routine data collection are necessary in order to expand the usefulness of demographic data. The role of institutions that produce consistent and comparable sets of demographic indicators essential for the global monitoring of the Goals is also highlighted.

B. Other parliamentary documents

49. For the forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development in 2015, the Division prepared and presented its proposed programme of work in the field of population for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/CN.9/2015/CRP.1). The Division also assisted the Bureau of the forty-eighth session in the preparation of the report on its intersessional meetings (E/CN.9/2015/2). Lastly, the Division supported the Rapporteur in preparing the final report of the Commission on its forty-eighth session in 2015 (E/2015/25-E/CN.9/2015/7).

50. The Economic and Social Council decided in its resolution 2015/252 that the Commission should review the functioning of its methods of work during its forty-ninth session, in 2016. The purpose of the review would be to enhance the impact of the work of the Commission and its contribution to the Council. The Council therefore requested the Division, in consultation with Member States and UNFPA, to prepare a note on the methods of work of the Commission, to be considered by the Commission at its forty-ninth session, in 2016. From July 2015 to January 2016, the Division thus engaged in a broad consultation process with Member States, relevant United Nations entities and international organizations and civil society. The results of this consultation process will inform the note on methods of work that the Division is preparing for the forty-ninth session.

C. Expert group meetings

51. In preparation for the forty-eighth session of the Commission, the Population Division convened an expert panel on the theme of "Integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda"[7] on 22 January 2015. The meeting provided useful substantive information for the

[7] See www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/other/7/index.shtml.

forthcoming discussion in the Commission on the same topic, and was organized in two sessions. The first was focused on population dynamics, economic development and poverty, while the second was devoted to population, resources, the environment and climate change. Three experts gave presentations at each session. The presentations, a webcast of the event and the report of the meeting are posted on the website of the Division.

52. In preparation for the forty-ninth session of the Commission, the Division convened an expert group meeting on the theme "Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda"[8] on 5 and 6 October 2015, to inform the report of the Secretary-General on the special theme of the Commission. More than 50 experts from national statistical offices, academia and international organizations attended the meeting. They reviewed common and new data sources of demographic data and discussed the demographic evidence required to adequately monitor the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

53. In order to identify global research priorities on population and development for the next 15 years, including their consideration by the Commission on Population and Development, the Division organized an expert group meeting on the theme "The post-2015 era: implications for the global research agenda on population and development",[9] held in New York on 10 April 2015, immediately preceding the forty-eighth session of the Commission. The meeting brought together researchers and academics, experts from Governments and international organizations and representatives from donor organizations and civil society to identify and discuss policy-relevant research questions on changing age structures and their impact; population and health; sustainable urbanization; and international migration and development. An issue of common concern raised at the meeting was the gaps in and inadequacies of available data, which could undermine efforts to conduct policy-relevant research in the post-2015 development era. The need for capacity-building and training, including on dissemination and use of research and evidence, was highlighted, as well as ways to improve the process of data collection, data sharing and collaboration with all stakeholders.

D. Monitoring of internationally agreed development goals

54. The Population Division made regular technical contributions to global monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals, and provided technical input for the development of a list of global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. The Division collaborated with WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNFPA to produce updated estimates in 2015 of indicators under the Millennium Development Goals: specifically, infant and under-5 mortality, maternal mortality, the adolescent birth rate, contraceptive prevalence and the unmet need for family planning. The Division also provided technical assessments and metadata for the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators at its final meeting, held in New York in February 2015 and for the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators at its meetings held in New York in June 2015 and in Bangkok in October 2015.

[8] See www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/expert-group/23/index.shtml.

[9] www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/expert-group/22/index.shtml.

55. During 2015, the Division contributed to the work of the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, whose task was to monitor progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 4 target for child mortality reduction, namely, a reduction of under-5 mortality by two thirds between 1990 and 2015. The Inter-agency Group was led by UNICEF, and included WHO, the Population Division and the World Bank. The Division provided input for updating the database on infant and under-5 mortality estimates maintained by UNICEF[10] and for reviewing final estimates. The Division also assisted in preparing *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality: Report 2015* and contributed to a companion *Lancet* paper.[11]

56. The Division also participated in the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-agency Group, which has been responsible for monitoring progress towards the reduction of maternal mortality as part of Millennium Development Goal 5. The Inter-agency Group is led by WHO, with the participation of UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank and the Population Division. For the 2015 round of maternal mortality estimates, the Division provided key input to the estimation process, including annual estimates of the number of women of reproductive age and the number of live births for individual countries or areas. The Division also assisted in reviewing final estimates and preparing the report entitled *Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2015*.[12]

57. The Division participated in the system-wide consultations and reviews with respect to the post-2015 development agenda, targets and indicators. The Division provided input and support for the meetings and consultations of the United Nations Technical Support Team on indicators related to mortality, reproductive health, international migration and birth registration, at the request of the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. The Division also provided technical support and input for the discussions of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (see para. 55 above). The Division contributed to the assessment of the proposed Sustainable Development Goal indicators with regard to pertinence, methodological soundness and ease of understanding and communication, particularly those in the health cluster (mainly under Goal 3), in collaboration with WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and other United Nations entities, and those related to migration (mainly under Goals 8 and 10), in collaboration with IOM, the World Bank and the Global Migration Group, among others.

58. The Division also provided substantive input to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs World Economic and Social Survey 2014/2015, "MDG lessons for post-2015", and to the report of the Secretary-General on the 2015 theme "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: what will it take?" presented at the Economic and Social Council 2015 annual ministerial review (July 2015). The Division was responsible for providing data, metadata and methodological input for the monitoring of six Millennium Development Goal indicators at the global level and population estimates used as denominators for Goal indicators related to the health, education

[10] See http://childmortality.org/.

[11] D. You et al. (2015), "Global, regional, and national levels and trends in under-5 mortality between 1990 and 2015, with scenario-based projections to 2030", *The Lancet*. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00120-8".

[12] See http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/.

and well-being of the population. In view of the data and methodological inputs the Division provided for global monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals, it is well prepared to provide data and substantive support for relevant Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators to review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IX. Dissemination of population information and data

59. During 2015, the Division continued to update and expand its website in order to provide access to timely population information for government officials, researchers in academia or the private sector, and civil society. The website sets out all publications issued by the Division and a full collection of the documents and statements before the Commission on Population and Development at its sessions. Web traffic statistics indicate that, in 2015, the Division's website was visited by about 34,000 users per day, generating about 9.7 million page views for the year.

60. To improve dissemination, all datasets and output related to *World Population Prospects* are made available online.[13] Users can download over 600 data files in Microsoft Excel format, as well as database-friendly ASCII files. The website also contains methodological information, analytical charts and the results of probabilistic fertility and mortality projections. According to Google Analytics data, the website had about 1.7 million page views in 2015, of which over 1 million were unique page views. The Division also maintains a website[14] that is focused exclusively on international migration activities.

61. The Division has actively engaged in promoting content through social media channels. For the annual session of the Commission on Population and Development in 2015, the Division collaborated with the Department of Public Information and with the Communications and Information Management Service of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to publicize the annual meeting, including some of its thematic reports, through the Facebook account of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Over the course of the sessions there were 14 Facebook posts with a combined total of 7,500 "likes". In addition, the Director of the Division launched a Twitter account to draw attention to some of the Division's major activities, such as the release of flagship publications or the launch of new global datasets. Furthermore, three videos on population-related themes were produced with input from the Division and posted on the Division website, discussing the latest population trends and implications for policy: *Preparing the World for Important Population Changes*, *Realizing Population and Development Commitments beyond 2014* and *70 Years of Development in 70 Seconds: Global Population*.

X. Technical cooperation

62. At the request of UNFPA, the United States Agency for International Development and MEASURE Evaluation, staff from the Population Division participated in a regional workshop held from 4 to 7 May 2015 in Bangkok, on

[13] See http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/.

[14] See www.unmigration.org.

estimating maternal mortality from census data. The workshop allowed 38 participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam to review state-of-the-art methods for analysing pregnancy-related census mortality data, to derive and evaluate maternal mortality estimates from the 2010 round of census, and to draw lessons for the next round of censuses in 2020.

63. In collaboration with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, the Division organized a regional workshop on the theme "Strengthening the collection and use of international migration data for development" (Dakar, September 2015). The main objective of the workshop was to strengthen the technical capacity of government officials to produce and analyse migration data from all relevant sources and to use it to inform national migration policies and development planning. At the workshop, the United Nations standards and definitions for collecting international migration data were covered, the various sources of migration data reviewed and indicators to measure the migration-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda discussed. The workshop was attended by 21 participants from 11 countries in Western and Northern Africa, including experts from the national statistical offices and relevant ministries. Regional experts from United Nations entities and international organizations also contributed to the workshop. Participants welcomed a proposal for a follow-up project with involvement of the Economic Community of West African States, IOM, the Population Division and the Statistics Division.

64. The Population Division organized a workshop in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, as part of the Development Account project entitled "*Strengthening capacities of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa to effectively produce and use population estimates and projections in policy-making for sustainable development*". The objective of the workshop was to assist national institutions in strengthening the capacity of their staff to produce technically sound and consistent population estimates and related demographic indicators. The workshop was attended by several professionals from the national statistical offices of African countries and was held in Addis Ababa from 5 to 9 October 2015.

Annex

Expert group meetings, publications and other materials organized or prepared by the Population Division

(1 January-31 December 2015)

Expert group meetings

Expert panel on "Integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda", New York, 22 January 2015.

Expert group meeting on the theme "The post-2015 era: Implications for the global research agenda on population and development", New York, 10 April 2015.

Expert group meeting on the theme "Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda", New York, 5 and 6 October 2015.

Expert group meeting on the theme "Policy responses to low fertility", New York, 2-3 November 2015.

Coordination meeting on international migration, New York, 12 to 13 February 2015.

Training workshops

Regional workshop on strengthening the collection and use of international migration data for development, Dakar, 8-11 September 2015. Organized jointly by the Population Division and the Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa.

Workshop on strengthening capacities of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa to effectively produce and use population estimates and projections in policy-making for sustainable development, Addis Ababa, 5-9 October 2015. Organized by the Population Division and the Economic Commission for Africa.

Reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents

Report of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development on its intersessional meetings (E/CN.9/2015/2)

Report of the Secretary-General on integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda (E/CN.9/2015/3)

Report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2014: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (E/CN.9/2015/6)

Draft programme of work of the Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/CN.9/2015/CRP.1)

Report of the Commission on Population and Development on its 48th session (11 April 2014 and 13-17 April 2015) (E/CN.9/2015/7)

Research studies

Trends in Contraceptive Use Worldwide 2015 (ST/ESA/SER.A/349)

Integrating Population Issues into Sustainable Development, including the Post-2015 Development Agenda (ST/ESA/SER.A/364)

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision (ST/ESA/SER.A/366)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Vol. I: Comprehensive Tables (ST/ESA/SER.A/379)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Vol. II: Demographic Profiles (ST/ESA/SER.A/380)

World Population Ageing 2015 — Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/368)

World Population Ageing 2015 — Report (ST/ESA/SER.A/390)

International Migration Report 2015 — Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/375)

Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the post-2015 era: Implications for the Global Research Agenda on Population and Development, working paper No. ESA/P/WP/239

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Key Findings and Advance Tables, working paper No. ESA/P/WP.241

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Methodology of the United Nations Population Estimates and Projections, working paper No. ESA/P/WP.242

Thirteenth coordination meeting on International Migration, working paper No. ESA/P/WP/240

Population 2030: Demographic Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development Planning (ST/ESA/SER.A/389)

Directory of Research on Ageing in Africa: 2004-2015 (ST/ESA/SER.A/391)

Databases

World Contraceptive Use 2015 (web datasets)[a]

Model-based Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2015 (web datasets)[a]

World Fertility Data 2015 (web dataset)[a]

World Marriage Data 2015 (web dataset)[a]

World Mortality Report 2015, CD-ROM Edition — Datasets in Excel Formats (POP/DB/MORT/2015)

World Mortality Report 2015: Mortality Data Inventory (interactive version on the web)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision (interactive database)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Comprehensive Dataset (web database)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Extended Dataset (web database)

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Special Aggregates (web database)

[a] Selected databases also available from the Division on USB device.

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision — Probabilistic Projections (web database)

Trends in International Migration Stock: The 2015 Revision (CD-ROM)

International Migration Flows to and from Selected Countries: The 2015 Revision (CD-ROM and web datasets)

Profiles of Ageing 2015 (interactive database)

Wallcharts, infocharts and data booklets

Population, Consumption and the Environment (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.XIII.2)

World Contraceptive Patterns 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XIII.8)

World Fertility Patterns 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XIII.9)

World Population 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No.E.16.XIII.7)

World Population Prospects 2015 — Data booklet (ST/ESA/SER.A/377)

International Migration 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XIII.12)

World Mortality 2015 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XIII.11)

World Population Ageing 2015 Infochart (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XIII.6)

Technical papers series

"Estimating Life Tables for Developing Countries" (Technical Paper No. 2014/4)

"The Impact of Socio-Economic Inequalities on Early Childhood Survival: Results from the Demographic and Health Surveys" (Technical Paper No. 2015/1)

"Risks of exposure and Vulnerability to Natural Disasters at the City Level: a Global Overview" (Technical Paper No. 2015/2)

"Population Ageing, Intergenerational Transfers and the Demographic Dividend in Ecuador" (Technical Paper No. 2015/3)

Policy briefs

"Youth Population Trends and Sustainable Development." Population Facts No. 2015/1

"Inequality in Early Childhood Survival." Population Facts No. 2015/3

"Trends in international migration, 2015." Population Facts No. 2015/4

"Integrating migration into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Population Facts No. 2015/5